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ABSTRACT

This report describes the development, functions, and operations of the Delaware Valley Community College Service Center in Pike County, Pennsylvania, which is designed to provide diversified and comprehensive two-year postsecondary education to residents of a large, rural area without a postsecondary institution. The Center is sponsored by the Delaware Valley School District and operated through a contract with Northampton County Area Community College (NCACC), the nearest community college. The policies, procedures, programs and courses of NCACC apply to the Center and its director is responsible to the NCACC president, but the Center retains local control and initiative through its own Operating Board. Funding is provided by the school district, student tuition and state reimbursement. The Center has no facilities of its own but provides a wide range of associate degree and certificate programs in liberal arts and occupational areas and non-credit adult education courses utilizing leased and borrowed facilities and part-time faculty. The Center's Cooperative Commuting College Division makes available specialized high-cost career programs through contractual arrangements with neighboring colleges in New York State. The Center is not offered as a model, but components may serve as a guide to be adapted by other rural areas. (JDS)

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RURAL COMMUNITY COLLEGES

A PENNSYLVANIA CASE STUDY

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION

Report

Kenneth B. Woodbury Jr.

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COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA 17126

COMMISSIONER OF HIGHER EDUCATION

February 7, 1977

Mr. Kenneth B. Woodbury, Jr.
Dean of Employees Relations
Northampton County Area Community
College
3835 Green Pond Road
Bethlehem, Pennsylvania 18017

Dear Mr. Woodbury.

We in the Office of Higher Education wish to commend you for the report on "Rural Community Colleges: A Pennsylvania Case Study." The paper recounts the activities and experiences of the unique community college service center approved by State Board.

The experiences in Pike County during the startup years of the service center should be helpful to residents of rural areas who are interested in providing opportunities for two-year postsecondary education.

Your paper, along with other information available through the Department of Education, should provide useful documentation for citizen groups wishing to study local educational needs and identify a solution suited to available resources.

Sincerely,

Gladys G. Handy

Gladys G. Handy, Acting
Commissioner of Higher Education

RURAL COMMUNITY COLLEGES: A PENNSYLVANIA CASE STUDY

KENNETH B. WOODBURY, JR.

INTRODUCTION

Comprehensive two-year post-secondary education in many states has been a synonym for the public community college, and to a more limited extent, the private junior college. The mission of the comprehensive two-year post-secondary institution includes transfer programs encompassing the traditional freshman and sophomore years of a baccalaureate degree, technical and vocational programs of one or two years duration leading to the attainment of entry-level skills for the world of work, and continuing education offerings providing lifetime learning activities. The essential elements of a comprehensive, two-year, post-secondary institution envision more than diversity in program choice but also counseling and remedial services to allow the proper implementation of an open-door admissions policy, geographic placement to maximize student access within a reasonable commuting distance, and low student tuition through significant subsidization by the state and a local sponsoring agency. Community control through local sponsorship and partial local funding of two-year, post-secondary education institutions has been one of the significant strengths of the community college movement in America. It ensures a responsiveness to labor market needs that has helped keep it in touch with the educational needs of its constituencies and nurtured its image as being consumer-oriented and learner-centered.

This paper is concerned with areas of the Commonwealth having a largely rural environment, sparse population density, and a limited tax base. Encompassing over forty-nine percent of the land mass of Pennsylvania it includes thirty of the sixty-six counties and is equal to or larger in size than nine states. The 1.2 million population equals or exceeds thirteen different states. The area, spread across the northern tier with dips into the south central section, represents a void in the state's post-secondary educational delivery system. The problem is how to structure two year, post-secondary

education for a rural environment with diversity of program choice, student access within a reasonable commuting distance, low tuition, and local support and sponsorship.

In discussing ways to maximize opportunity, a Task Force created by the State Board of Education examined several new mechanisms including change in institutional mission, inter-institutional cooperation through consortial arrangements, contracting with existing institutions for specialized programs and services not available, and external degree programs where traditional campuses might be uneconomical. To finance this system, the Task Force recommended changes in both direct aid to students and institutions. Student assistance would be increased by (1) reciprocity agreements with contiguous states, (2) equalization of tuition fees for part-time and full-time students, and (3) changes in the state's student-aid program to (a) include part-time students, (b) increase maximum grant limits and liberalize eligibility, (c) allow eligibility for convicted felons, (d) provide additional appropriations to match increases in institutional tuitions, and (e) extend eligibility to students enrolled in programs of less than two years as well as students requiring more than two years because of necessary remedial work.

For aid to institutions, the Task Force suggested (1) state financing of contracts during a transitional period to assist institutions changing their mission, (2) high start-up expenses for high-cost technical programs, (3) initial costs for consortial arrangements and developmental expenses for external degree programs and other nontraditional mechanisms to impact rural areas, (4) initiation of a tax equalization formula to assist local communities in sponsoring post-secondary institutions, (5) incentives for renovation and facility expansion, (6) assistance for counseling and remedial programs for educationally disadvantaged students, (7) priority funding for public institutions and (8) public aid to private institutions tied to the number of state-aided students educated.

LOCAL RESPONSES

Local communities were also concerned with increasing access to two-year, post-secondary education. The Johnstown area has been exploring ways to utilize its secondary vocational-technical school in the late afternoon and evening hours as a post-secondary technical institute, and contracting for general education courses with an adjacent four-year university branch campus. The Scranton area has been investigating for several years the feasibility of creating a consortial community college composed of four-year and two-year institutions mixing public, private, and proprietary. Chester County has been considering a counseling-oriented institution that guides students to a variety of local colleges.

This discussion details another local effort in a rural community containing no post-secondary institutions or vocational-technical schools.

The Delaware Valley School District PTA Council in Pike County was concerned with inclusion in the mainstream of higher education. In 1974 representatives from the Pennsylvania State University and the nearest community college, Northampton County Area Community College (NCACC) met with the PTA to explore possibilities for services. Penn State University demurred to a request to establish a traditional branch campus. NCACC, 70 miles away, suggested that the PTA Council undertake surveys to identify the community's expectations, range of needs, and desired services.

Located in the northeastern corner of the Commonwealth, the county's approximately 14,000 citizens contain the state's largest percentage of senior citizens in a 98 percent nonfarm, totally rural, environment. Bordered on two sides by the Delaware River, the Pocono Mountains close-in the remainder of the county. Approximately one-half its boundaries are contiguous to New York and New Jersey. A Federally-designated Appalachian community, the county contained no post-secondary institutions and only one school district totally within its borders. The district consisted of four vintage elementary build-

ings of which one-half are two-room schools, a modern middle school, and a relatively new high school. Two other school districts to the west and to the south include fringes of the county. The major shopping district is out of state. Adjacent Orange County in New York is served by a community college based in Middletown. Contiguous Sussex County in New Jersey is totally rural and contains no post-secondary institutions but does support a secondary vocational-technical school.

A comprehensive survey, structured in consultation with Northampton County Area Community College was mailed with an explanatory cover letter. It outlined a public two-year institution utilizing existing community facilities serving the tri-state area with an open-door admissions policy offering low tuition for district residents. Separate questionnaires were devised for (1) the 1972, 1973, and 1974 high-school graduates, (2) professionals, (3) currently enrolled high-school students, (4) area business and industry, and (5) a random sampling of community citizens. 2,049 questionnaires were mailed and over 41% returned with a local business leader paying all survey costs.

The survey indicated business and industrial leaders felt that present educational facilities were fair to poor with 92% of them favorably inclined toward establishing a community college with only 1% unfavorable. Community attitudes ranged from two-thirds personnaly interested in enrolling to 95% desiring their son or daughter to attend. Only 27% of the present high-school students indicated that they would not be interested. College parallel, career programs, and specialized courses shared equally in the number of student responses. One-half of the recent high-school graduates surveyed said that they would have attended a community college with another 27% undecided. Liberal arts and business related courses rated high as a newspaper survey had shown earlier, but a significant percentage were scattered over a myriad of technical and vocational career possibilities. Over 90% of the responding professionals indicated a need for post-secondary education both in improving the community and in supplying trained employees. A strong interest in vocational education as a part of post-secondary education was expressed in every group.

THE CONCEPT

Options presented to the PTA Council and public defined the future of the institution based on the survey results. What emerged was the concept of a community college service center operated autonomously but under the legal auspices of Northampton County Area Community College with local sponsorship, control, and support.

The range of possibilities included (1) adult basic education, (2) liberal arts and career associate degree programs, (3) noncredit continuing education, (4) vocational school/technical institute training for secondary and post-secondary students, (5) external degree offerings, (6) cooperative arrangements to enhance the diverse educational, health, social, recreational, and welfare agencies of the tri-state area, (7) senior citizen programs, (8) inter-library cooperative arrangements, (9) community counseling and career development services, (10) community education in the district schools, (11) coordination of cultural activities, (12) enrollment of district residents at NCACC as in-county residents, and (13) early enrollment for high school students. The concept emphasized the use of existing community facilities including the district's middle and high schools, the county library, and area churches so that a full program from morning through evening could be provided for both full-time and part-time students.

The final plan for a community college service center as recommended by an advisory committee representing local priorities included (1) general education for full-time and part-time students available during the day or evening leading to an associate degree in liberal arts, education or business administration, (2) a College-At-Home Program for part-time students unable to attend regularly scheduled classes, (3) career education in accounting, banking, fire technology, real estate, and secretarial science, (4) vocational education in plumbing, construction, carpentry, auto mechanics, food service, and heating/ventilation/refrigeration through an apprenticeship arrangement educating students directly in the world of work until a vocational school/technical

institute could be constructed, (5) attendance at NCACC in occupational areas not available locally, (6) adult basic education through "on-call" tutorial assistance at the Center or in the student's or tutor's home, (7) comprehensive continuing education including the current school district's adult education program, senior citizen courses, leisure-time activities, specialized career courses, cultural activities, and participation by health, welfare, and social service agencies to provide such activities as nutritional counseling, dental screening, and child guidance, and (8) contracting for programs from contiguous out-of-county educational institutions.

The initial enrollment projection as calculated from high school class sizes, county population configuration, and other Pennsylvania community college experiences yielded an estimate of the equivalent of 87 full-time students of whom 67 would be in credit courses. The facilities would be provided by the school district as an in-kind contribution with administrative headquarters at the Delaware Valley Senior High School. Adding a vocational-technical school and institute would require further study and cost analysis. Full-time resident tuition was set at $430 with resident continuing education charges at 50¢ per contact hour. The $138,000 first-year budget included $4,000 for capital expenditures with an additional $5,000 for start-up costs to cover May and June prior to commencing the fiscal year. Cost to the district included the entire $5,000 initial charges and $44,671 for 1975/76. State reimbursement and student tuition would provide the remainder of the budget revenue.

A mission statement was adopted to guide the services of the Center and defining its roles providing diversified and comprehensive two-year, post-secondary education meeting local needs in credit and noncredit programming including adult basic education and stressing vocational and technical training in conjunction with academic, university parallel programs, utilizing the existing facilities of the community. An administrator, a community counselor, and a secretary comprised the full-time staff with instructors, tutors, business-records clerk, and continuing education coordinator employed on a part-time basis.

A 9% administrative and support services fee included in the budget was paid to NCACC as the Center's proportionate support of the parent institution for providing to the Center access to its total physical and human resources. The Center's staffing pattern anticipated support from NCACC in such vital areas as student financial aid, computer reports, fiscal and student records, payroll and purchasing, placement, transcripts, overall administrative supervision, library consultation, and audio-visual support. General library and reference services had not been well planned and became an early challenge.

The legal basis for the Delaware Valley Community College Service Center rests with a six-page contract between NCACC, the parent institution, and the Delaware Valley School District, the sponsoring agency. NCACC's responsibilities included establishing, operating, and administering a community college service center beginning May 1, 1975 and concluding on June 30, 1978 with a two-year renewable option. The contract can be cancelled if the annual budget of the Center does not receive approval by both parties or due to insufficient student interest or inadequate instructional facilities. The contract's purpose provides a mutually acceptable period of time to evaluate the Center's potential with the intention of replacing the contract for services with sponsorship through long-term articles of agreement.

Delineation of services, approval of programs, recommendations for staffing, appointment of any advisory committees, preparation of the annual budget, and determination of policy rests with the local operating board consisting of nine to fifteen area residents appointed by the school board subject to confirmation by NCACC's trustees. The contract mandates that only the services as recommended by the operating board can be provided by the Center thus insuring local control and initiative. The actions of the operating board, however, are subject to the constraints of the approved budget, policies of the parent institution except as the NCACC trustees may modify upon request, the Community College Act of 1963, and State Board of Education regulations. The veto power by the parent institution ensures sound educational practices and protection of the accreditation status

of the parent institution which automatically includes the Center.

The contract reaffirmed the initial philosophy "to provide services utilizing to the maximum extent feasible, the existing educational, health, governmental, and social service institutions and agencies as well as existing physical facilities and human resources of the Delaware Valley School District Area in the most efficient and economical manner possible consistent with...sound educational practices."

The Region II Higher Education Planning Council representing all post-secondary institutions - public, private, and proprietary - in a seven-county area of northeastern Pennsylvania acted as a forum to review the impact. The proposal after verbal presentation to the Council's April meeting received endorsement as "a creative and positive cooperative effort...sound in purpose and scope...." Meetings were then held with officials of the three closest colleges, East Stroudsburg State College - forty miles away in Monroe County, the Worthington-Scranton Campus of Penn State University - fifty miles distant in Lackawanna County, and Orange County Community College - twenty miles from Pike County in Middletown, New York. They expressed a willingness to contract for services to the limits allowed by law.

STAFFING

The director functions as the chief educational and fiscal officer of the Center ultimately responsible to the president of NCACC. Policies, procedures, programs, and courses of NCACC apply to the Center except as the Operating Board otherwise request exemption. Hence the Center commenced with the cumulative experiences and past practices of NCACC and the flexibility to develop as local conditions, needs, and experience dictate.

The anticipated addition of a vocational-technical school operated under the auspices of the Center necessitate a certified vocational-technical school director because of State Board of Education policy. A secretary and community counselor were employed

by the Operating Board and the school district's past director of adult education was secured on a part-time basis as coordinator for continuing education. The staffing pattern continued to evolve during the year with a half-time registrar-business agent beginning in September being phased out in May with those duties absorbed by the full-time secretary. A half-time professional librarian became a full-time position by June of 1976 and a half-time evening secretary was added in late fall. The position of coordinator for continuing education was vacated at the end of the year and replaced for the second year of operation by a coordinator of student services. Total staffing costs for 1976-77 actually represented a decrease over expenditures for 1975-76. Deletions compensated for the additions to the staff. One-half the librarian's salary is being paid by the Pike County Public Library since the librarian is employed on a shared basis with the Center.

All teaching faculty hired are adjunct, most teaching only one course a semester. Extensive advertising and interviewing built a human resources bank of extensive proportions which is drawn upon throughout the year to meet student needs as they became identified. The credentials of applicants to teach credit courses are reviewed by appropriate academic departments and divisions at the parent institution. The director retains final authority to recommend employment to the operating board and president of the college.

CURRICULUM

The institution's educational organization consists of five instructional divisions, each providing distinctly different services and approaches to education. These components include community college, technical institute, college-at-home program, center for adult learning, and cooperating commuting college divisions.

The community college division offers courses on campus during the morning and evening hours in four associate degree programs. Students enroll on a part-time or full-time basis in accounting, business administration, education, and liberal arts. The courses necessary to complete the liberal arts and education associate degree programs

closely paralleled each other as to the courses for the accounting and business administration programs. A constant problem is attaining the critical mass necessary to offer courses. Ten was set as the required minimum number of paid enrollees with a class of less possible if the instructor volunteered to teach on a prorated basis. Evening classes proved to be more popular than morning.

During 1975-1976, 43% of the credit students enrolled for enrichment and personal development purposes with 26% in real estate courses, 9% in accounting and business administration, 7% in liberal arts and education, and the remainder scattered in a variety of other curricula. 67% of the students taking credit courses were over 24-years old, 1% still in high school, and 20% over 40. Part-time enrollment as measured by the equivalent of full-time students was 1½ times the full-time rate. The original projection of the equivalent of 67 full-time students was exceeded as 75½ enrolled. The unduplicated head count consisted of 152 registered in the fall, 116 in the spring, and 213 different people taking credit courses throughout the year. While the equivalent of full-time students in credit courses dropped in the spring, the average for the year of 68.42 exceeded slightly the original projection.

Credit students came from throughout the local school district according to the approximate proportion that the municipalities were representative of the county's population. 5% came from New York and New Jersey and 9% from municipalities of Pike County outside the district.

The technical institute division attempted to provide a program of vocational education prior to the construction of a vocational-technical school. Noncredit one-year vocational certificate skill-training programs were conducted at approved work sites in the fields of auto mechanics, food service, and construction carpentry.

Four students enrolled in the technical institute - one each in auto mechanics and construction carpentry and two in food service. Competency-based instructional manuals were designed to provide students with entry-level skills to enter the job market. A review of similar programs throughout the nation and consultants guided the final de-

sign. The food service program, for example, was divided into five course areas requiring 1,728 hours on the job for the average student to gain competency in 138 skill areas. Each skill competency was defined in measurable terms and included an assessment instrument. Ratings for each task covered performance task knowledge and subject knowledge levels. Performance ratings included highly proficient, competent, partially proficient, or extremely limited. Task knowledge covered nomenclature, procedures, operating principles, and theory. Subject knowledge assessed included facts, principles, analysis, and evaluation. The student's supervisor or an outside evaluator rated and dated the completion of each task. It necessitated building in the student the attitude that he was going not to work but to school. The supervisor-employer had to realize that the work site for the student was a learning station. Continual duty rotation was required with only enough repetition to ensure mastery of each specific task. Students and supervisors reacted favorably toward the program and accepted the challenge and opportunity. The strength of the program was in stressing task performance and skill competency attainment while its weakness was in providing theoretical knowledge.

The College-At-Home Program (CAHP) was originally devised at NCACC and initiated in 1974. Allowing college courses to be taken without class attendance, the CAHP permits students to start courses at any time during the year with sixteen weeks allowed for completion. Information exchanges between students and instructors take place by mail, cassette tape, or telephone. Instructional materials in print and audio format have been extensively prepared through successive federal grants allowing the instructor to assume the role of managing instruction by providing assistance and assessment to complement the teaching done through self-paced instructional materials. Associate degree programs available through the CAHP include accounting, business administration, child care education, data processing, liberal arts, education, and general education. Credit certificate programs include architectural technology, child care education, library technical assistant, and a clerk-typist option of secretarial science.

The Center for Adult Learning Division was organized to provide a comprehensive

continuing and adult education noncredit curriculum. It is divided into six areas of student interest - business and career development, recreational activities, leisure-time pursuits, arts and crafts, adult education (preparation for high school equivalency examination), and senior citizen offerings. Operating Board suggestions, telephone inquiries, citizen comment and inquiries, and staff predictions shape the selection of offerings. 41% of the fall courses advertised and 54% in the spring enrolled sufficient students during the first year.

The continuing education classes enrolled the overwhelming majority of total number of citizens attending the Center. However, in terms of equivalent full-time students the credit enrollment represented three-quarters of the fall total and two-thirds of the spring. The number of students enrolling in the Center for Adult Learning went from 382 in the fall to 548 in the spring with 764 different citizens having enrolled in a course during the year, two-thirds of them female. In counting the noncredit student in terms of equivalent full-time student, the fall enrollment of 29 increased to 44 in the spring representing an annual average of 36. The noncredit offerings of the Center exceeded expectations and were a significant factor in the college's early and widespread acceptance in the community and among older adults.

The fifth division of the Center is the Cooperating Community College Division. It was recognized early in the planning process that specialized career technical programs could not be offered because of (1) insufficient interest in any one area to warrant the hiring of staff, (2) the lack of specialized laboratory facilities required of such programs as dental hygiene, dental assisting, data processing, medical laboratory technology, nursing, and others, and (3) the high costs associated with start-up expenses to initiate such programs and continuing expenditures to support the courses. Diversity of program choice is an essential element of a comprehensive community college and the Center was not going to be an exception. Five full-time students attended other community colleges in Pennsylvania through the sponsorship of the Center. Programs and services of

four area institutions within "reasonable" commuting distance were explored. The programs at East Stroudsburg State College parallel the courses offered through the community college division and would be of interest to a student only as a junior and thus outside the scope of the Center's mission. The Worthington-Scranton Campus of Penn State University offer engineering and engineering-related technology programs but limit enrollment to local residents.

This left the programs of Orange County Community College (OCCC) and the Orange-Ulster Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) in Goshen, New York. Approximately ten full-time students indicated an interest in attending Orange County Community College in architectural technology, medical laboratory technology, nursing, electronics, commercial art, police science, and a life science option of liberal arts. Four full-time students requested permission to attend BOCES in commercial art, retailing, heating/ventilation/refrigeration, and practical nursing. Purchase of service contracts were drawn up. Responsibility for seeking and gaining admission to the program rested with the student, but once accepted by OCCC or BOCES to a program not available at the Center, a student could enroll through the Center paying the local in-district rate. Any fees other than tuition, such as insurance or activity fees, were the student's responsibility. BOCES and OCCC then billed the Center for the out-of-state tuition that it normally would have collected from the students. The citizens of Pike County had available to them not only the offerings of the Center, but the entire range of OCCC and BOCES programs on a space-available basis. Students enrolled in this division are considered to be regular students of the Center and must take at the Center any liberal arts courses which are part of their technical program. Contracting for educational services by a Pennsylvania College from an out-of-state institution had never been done before.

FACILITIES

The use of existing facilities in the community had always been a primary mission. The only exception to construction was the area vocational-technical school. This would be used during the day by secondary school students and would not be constructed merely for collegiate use.

The district's high school was selected as the administrative headquarters. An underutilized ticket booth was pressed into service and shared by the director and secretary. Space in the general administrative offices of the high school was used for the registrar-business agent and a small music practice booth was converted into an office for community counselor. During the day, credit classes were held on the stage of the auditorium that with a folding partition made its conversion to a classroom convenient except during the winter months when inadequate heat caused a move to a grange hall in Matamoras. During the late afternoon and evening hours, virtually the entire building was at the disposal of the college including secretarial science rooms, laboratories, general purpose classrooms, industrial arts shop, choral room, home economics room, and cafeteria. As many classes as possible were scheduled in the high school to facilitate administrative supervision, student counseling, general communication, and institutional identification.

Other off-campus facilities used during the first year included several churches, a meat company in New York, construction sites in New Jersey, a restaurant in Milford, and an automotive shop in New York.

The use of the high school, while initially providing the opportunity to begin operations quickly, slowly became identified as the college's chief limiting factor. The younger the student, the greater the reluctance to return to a high-school atmosphere. The fact that the Center did not employ current high-school faculty to teach credit courses, but drew upon other qualified instructors from throughout the tristate area, did not completely mitigate the negativism associated with the high-school setting.

A fortunate turn of events allowed the college to secure a church facility with an attached education center as a permanent campus. The vacant church facility in uptown Matamoras was leased for five years at a nominal charge. The move from the high school to this permanent facility was effected in early June of 1976.

This campus provided space for a student lounge, seven general-purpose classrooms, a main office and reception area, administrative offices, auditorium, limited off-street parking, and kitchen. In addition, access to the high school and middle school were retained for their specialized facilities including gymnasium, shop, secretarial science, and laboratory facilities. The former church facility provided over 5,600 assignable square feet and more importantly, a positive and permanent identification of the college in the community. Several who attended an open house to inspect the renovated facility remarked with pride that "Matamoras was now a college town." The Borough Council passed a unanimous resolution of support and welcome.

The high school biology laboratory and secretarial science rooms were found to be inadequately equipped for collegiate instructional purposes. As a result, a federal grant was submitted and approved to purchase biological and secretarial science equipment, which while purchased by the college for college use will be made available to high school students during the day and thus improve both instructional programs. This multiplier effect of the Center was one of the anticipated benefits of structuring a two-year, post-secondary institution that was closely integrated with the community.

In addition, the need for television production equipment with access to the three cable television companies servicing the tristate area was identified by both school district officials and operating board members. A local newspaper offered to submit an application to a private foundation on behalf of the college. The effort for private funds was unsuccessful, but a federal request was granted and a color television system was purchased at the end of the year. Area health and social service agencies will be included in programming possibilities with a dedicated channel from the three area cable

companies allowing programming throughout the day for citizen viewing, regardless of work schedule.

STUDENT SERVICES

Student services were severely limited by budgetary restrictions, inadequate facility arrangements, and limited student enrollments.

The community counselor coordinated financial aid for students and served as a liaison with the financial aid office at NCACC which processed applications and made awards. Test batteries were available but counseling services were primarily limited to academic, transfer, and limited personal advising, as well as a referral service for those needing professional counseling.

Credit instructors assisted in the early identification of students with potential academic problems so that professional tutoring could be arranged at no expense to the student. On-call professional tutoring functioned well even though underutilized and remains an area for future expansion.

LIBRARY SERVICES

The provision of proper library services had been given a low priority during the formulation of the Service Center concept and became an early concern. The contract with Orange County Community College included a clause allowing students free and unlimited on-site use of the OCCC library facility. In addition, a $5 fee per student would allow check-out privileges and would be paid by the Center if recommended by an instructor. This provided access to a complete community college library within reasonable commuting distance.

The Pike County Library and high school library were investigated for in-county limited library services. It was decided for a variety of reasons to concentrate on the Pike County Public Library and enter into a cooperative arrangement that would enhance

both the college and public library activities. The public library provided limited services, including access to a nontechnical collection for limited reference materials, interlibrary loan, assistance of a professional librarian, reading room, and reserve books for their courses. Throughout the year, increased emphasis and reliance was placed on the public library to upgrade and improve its services, collection, staff, and hours of operation.

A half-time professional librarian was employed by the college with offices at the public library. Librarians from the parent institution provide consultative services to the public library making detailed recommendations with respect to improvement of the collection and services.

At the end of the first year, a detailed memo of understanding between the library and the Center had been signed covering facility usage, equipment, examinations, staffing requirements, and general administration. The half-time librarian was employed full time by the college with the library reimbursing the Center for one-half the salary and fringe benefits. This joint librarian was subsequently named director of the public library and the library board was reorganized to include a member of the college's Operating Board. A joint purchasing arrangement was included for capital equipment that would benefit both students and county residents. A federal grant was submitted and approved for library books totaling $4,000 which will be housed at the public library. The county commissioners also increased their fiscal support of the library. This illustrates another example of how the Center has impacted the life of the community.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Community relations were viewed as an important priority in order to gain public acceptance of a new institution that was partially supported by local tax funds. The reliance by community colleges, in part, on local property taxes has been a negative factor both with respect to passage of budgets for existing community colleges and as

an inhibiting factor in the development of new community colleges in those areas that can afford to support an institution. The effect on millage was of considerable concern to two segments of the population. The elderly on a fixed income were fearful of rising rates and some parents were concerned that school tax funds in short supply would be diverted from their primary mission of providing a quality K through 12 program. The district included in its budget the local cost necessary to support the Center without increasing the millage rate. This brought to six the number of years that the millage had remained constant. For the second year of operation, the Center requested no change in local support, even with the inclusion of funding for the start-up costs of the vocational-technical school under Center auspices. This had a substantial effect upon countering community taxpayer concern.

THE FUTURE

How then should the Center's initial year be evaluated? Statistically the initial projection of registering the equivalent of 87 full-time students had been exceeded by a significant percentage with 105 the year's full-time equivalent student enrollment. There still remains a potential for further growth without significantly affecting expenditures thus making the Center more cost effective. With the eventual realization of the post-secondary skill training programs through the vocational-technical school building in the fall of 1977, enrollment should increase in the third year after experiencing a relatively stable second year. Judicious program expansion in selected vocational areas coupled with a growing county population base projects potential of the equivalent of 150 full-time students within five years. As the student enrollment increases, the ratio of administrative costs to instructional expenditure should improve from its current ratio of 57:43. A cost benefit analysis also revealed that the expenditure per equivalent full-time student of $1,155 was considerably below the state community college average of $1,435. The school district share of the operating budget was 35% or approximately $516 per equivalent full-time student. The lease of the new facility from the church cost 36¢ per square foot and the expenditure per student clockhour was $2.69.

But statistics are cold and people's perception of success or failure were not necessarily limited by or even cognizant of the relevant statistical information. Their judgments were formulated by a myriad of factors, some sound, some fanciful, others mystical.

A community team named by the Operating Board in May met to investigate and explore the Center's facilities and services, question staff and students, and prepare an evaluation report to the Operating Board, school board, and the community. They examined and observed the credit program, noncredit offerings, student services, library, physical facilities, interviewed staff, explored the college's relationsips with the community, and analyzed the statistical data. They felt that the Center was "very beneficial [in] educating not only the young people but the older citizens" and were impressed with the strong start.

The goals and objectives established prior to the initiation of the college were achieved to a significant degree. The mission statement was maintained with the Center staying within its budget and actually generating a modest surplus which was used for extensive renovation of facilities for a permanent campus. While the initial year might be judged a success, can it be repeated and will it continue?

Besides solving the problems of the moment and delivering what had been promised, it was also necessary to initiate a strong planning process to insure future viability and a proactive stance. A three-year plan listed goal statements that would maintain the existing operation and those that would add new dimensions to further enhance the ability of the college to achieve its mission. It was reviewed and endorsed by the Operating Board as the official blueprint of the institution. The plan was further reviewed and approved by the appropriate committees of the parent institution. An annual plan detailed objectives to be achieved in the succeeding twelve months to realize the goal statements.

CONCLUSION

Potential problems still exist. Will the Center, including its vocational-technical school meet the needs of sufficient numbers of students to be cost effective? Can it maintain program flexibility to ensure that the region's job market does not become overly saturated with highly skilled but unemployed or underemployed laborers? Is the concept of a combined secondary/post-secondary vocational school/technical institute viable?

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The strength of the Center will lie in achieving a formal, sponsored arrangement with NCACC that substitutes articles of agreement for the contract and thus solidifies the relationship and the structure in indelible ink rather than pencil. The added sponsorship of two adjacent school districts to include all of Pike County would provide a broadened base of support. Its future lies in a strong, competency-based vocational program serving 200 secondary students and enrolling the equivalent of some 40 to 60 full-time post-secondary vocational students. Securing reciprocity with New York and New Jersey will join the tristate area of Orange, Sussex, and Pike counties in an educational common market. The strengthened concept of life-long learning tailored to meet the total educational needs of its citizenry and improving the quality of community life will make the area an attractive and productive place to live, work, and retire.

The Center will also be assessed in the long run by its impact on encouraging industry and commerce to locate within the region. This would provide a more balanced economy with a diversified job market that can better weather the strains of the business cycles and cushionthe periodic swings of the American economy. Knowing the problems and realizing the potential is half the battle. Now the other half begins.

The Delaware Valley Community College Service Center is not a model to be imposed upon any region of the country, rural or urban. But components could serve as a guide that could be adapted and adopted to assist other areas of the Commonwealth and the country. Perhaps its approach to the problem will prove more important than its solutions.